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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2009

In Today's Papers

Erdogan: There is No Decline In Turkey's EU Enthusiasm
Media outlets report Prime Minister Erdogan hosted a luncheon with the ambassadors of EU countries and said there has not been a decline in Turkey's enthusiasm or momentum towards its EU bid. "The attitudes of some EU countries, however, paved the way for the erosion of public enthusiasm for Turkey's EU bid," said Erdogan.

Papers also report that in the meeting with the EU ambassadors, Prime Minister Erdogan said the state was distributing free schoolbooks to primary and secondary school students, and added this arrangement would be expanded to embrace also minority schools. Liberal Radikal says the decision to give free books to minority schools was adopted in line with a complaint filed by Varujan Turac, a Turkish Armenian.

Basbug: NATO Members Should Assume Common Stance against Terror
Media outlets report General Ilker Basbug, the chief of the military General Staff (TGS), told the Silk Road Generals-Admirals Seminar held in Istanbul there was no guarantee that nations which had not suffered from terrorism so far would never suffer. "This problem can only be solved by a collective effort of all nations, particularly allied ones," said Basbug. Basbug stressed he believed NATO member countries should eliminate the differences in their positions and policies, assuming a "common stance against terrorism." The top general defined terrorism as the most serious threat against the international community and the security of NATO. "Terrorism not only targets at lives of innocent people but also threatens common humanitarian values such as democracy, freedom and human rights," emphasized Basbug. Basbug added it would be "a mistake to believe terrorism can be eliminated solely by taking economic and socio-cultural measures when terrorist organizations maintain their armed forces." Basbug underlined that the Turkish military was determined to fight against terrorism until the terrorist organization "dissolves and disarms." Basbug said he believed NATO's enlargement would help strengthen confidence and stability in all Euro-Atlantic area, and accession of new members would help fulfill a free and united Europe and NATO target.

FM Davutoglu Speaks on Political Climate in Iran

Papers report that, after his meeting with the UAE's Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdallah bin Zayid al-Nuhayyan, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu spoke to press on a range of issues, including the current political situation in Iran. Davutoglu said that Iran was an important neighboring country and a friend and sibling to Turkey. He said Iran's stability was of great importance for Turkey and the region. "We hope that the developments in Iran are concluded in the most proper way and through internal mechanisms. We also hope that the recent elections in the country, which were held in a dynamic atmosphere and with a high participation rate, are not overshadowed," Davutoglu said.

Bryza: Nagorno-Karabakh Deal Possible Mid-July
Mainstream Sabah reports Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza told Reuters that international mediators hope to reach a "framework agreement" between Azerbaijan and Armenia regarding Nagorno-Karabakh at talks tentatively planned for mid-July in Russia. Sabah also says the Azeri Trend News Agency reported President Obama would raise Nagorno-Karabakh when he visits Moscow July 4-6.

In a related story, CNN Turk reports Armenian FM Nalbandiyan said during a press conference in Yerevan yesterday, "Despite the preconditions placed (on the Turkey-Armenia normalization process) by Turkish leaders regarding Nagorno-Karabakh," Nalbaniyan is "hopeful" regarding Turkey and Armenia's normalization process.

Gul: A Free Press Makes Countries More Transparent (Milliyet)
Mainstreams Milliyet and Hurriyet report that at Monday's anniversary celebration of the Photo Reporters' Association in

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Ankara, President Abdullah Gul said, "A free press makes countries more transparent and helps democracy take root." Gul also noted, "If a free press is absent in a country, there are many other things that are lacking. If the truth and wrongdoing in a country are not freely reported, there will be a major tendency in that country toward wrong things," said Gul.

Neda, The Global Symbol (Milliyet)
The main international story today is Iran, and the story is making the front pages. Media note that Neda has become a rallying call to demonstrators to defy the threats from Religious Leader Khameney and the Revolutionary Guard. Mainstream Vatan headlines, "The New Slogan in Iran: We Are All Neda," and the paper notes, "Yesterday Iranians demonstrated in several countries throughout the world, including Turkey, and they used Neda's photograph and chanted 'We are all Neda.'" Mainstream Hurriyet's front-page headline reads, "Neda Lights the Fire of Revolution" and the article reports, "demonstrations start today to honor the martyred girl." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports, "Iranians Are Mourning Neda," as "The voice of Iran." The paper also calls the Revolutionary Guard, "the country's most effective military force," and notes, "this distinguished force has stated that they will start a revolutionary struggle against the opposition protestors." Leftist Taraf reports "Despite the threats from the Revolutionary Guard," "The opposition filled the streets yesterday for slain Neda." Liberal Radikal headlines, "An Ultimatum from The Regime," and reports, "Mousavi won't back down in Iran as he calls for peaceful demonstrations," but "following Khamaney, the Revolutionary Guard also issued an ultimatum 'We are ready to fight a revolution against the conspirators.'"

In a related article, Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak reports, "Mousavi Could Be Tried," as "The tensions in Iran continue," and "The streets are being turned into a war zone by the protestors," and "Parliament's Justice Commission Director Sahruki said Mousavi could be tried for inciting activities against national security." Next to a photo of a weeping woman who is holding a photo of Ahmadinejad, the paper's caption reads, "In Iran it is the women who are shedding the most tears," as "Iranian women are crying out 'Finish this sibling quarrel.'"

Editorials on Iran

Rusen Cakir wrote in mainstream Vatan: "It becomes a manifestation

of demise for any revolution when the regime starts lying to its people. This is exactly what is happening in today's Iran. The regime has significantly lost its legitimacy and sooner or later we will start discussing the new directions in which Iran is about to be heading."

Sami Kohen wrote in mainstream Milliyet: "Iran is still like a boiler and there is no sign for calmness from the rulers or the protestors. More harsh measures by the regime are expected while Iran moves toward a more chaotic situation."

Ibrahim Karagul wrote in Islamist oriented Yeni Safak: "Despite the beliefs of some American neo-cons and others, the ongoing street riots will not lead to a change of regime. The regime, on the other hand, will likely get tougher on protestors as well as more radical on regional and international policies. It is possible that in order to divert the attention, Iran is creating new tension in some other parts of the region, such as in Lebanon."

TV News (CNN Turk) Domestic

- The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) writes both the Turkish government and the PKK are ready for compromise, and that the U.S. can help demobilize the PKK by acting as a trusted go-between.
- Prime Minister Erdogan says the parliament will not go into summer recess before the parliament passes 17-18 reforms drafted within the

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framework of EU harmonization.

- Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul visits Spain to attend a meeting of defense ministers of A-400M cargo plane program countries included in Seville.
- The National Security Council (MGK) will hold a meeting June 30.
- The World Bank says Turkey's economy may shrink 5.5 percent this year. The bank forecasts a return to growth in 2010 of 1.5 percent, and projects 3 percent in 2011.
- As of August 1, ferry service will start between Haifa and Famagusta (Gazimagusa) in Turkish Cyprus.

World

- Iran begins three-day airforce exercises in the Gulf and the Sea of Oman to raise operational and support capability.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) says the global tally of deaths from swine flu has increased by 51 to 231.
- Britain's Foreign Office says it is evacuating the families of staff based in Iran amid continued violence in the wake of the country's disputed election.
- A senior al-Qaeda operative says the terrorist organization would use Pakistan's nuclear weapons to strike the United States if it had the chance to do so.

JEFFREY